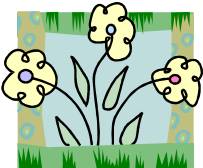




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# Project Newsletter



Hello! The Northern Tier Interoperability Project (NTIP) is proceeding along well. The committees continue to be working hard on the details of the project under the direction of the Northern Tier Interoperability Consortium (NTIC) Board.

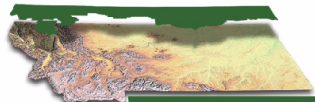
## Project Update



The NTIC Board meets monthly on the first Thursday of each month at the Great Northern in Havre. The momentum of the NTIP is strong and steady, and new partnerships are being formed with all levels of government almost daily. At the last NTIC Board meeting:

- The Technical Team made a recommendation to the Board that the NTIC issue an RFP for the microwave procurement. The Board accepted the recommendation and send the Technical Team off to develop the RFP.
- The Montana National Guard is working on obtaining 2006 funding to contribute in part to the NTIP in order to provide connectivity to the eight armories within the Northern Tier.
- An MOU has been prepared and is under review by the Montana Highway Patrol for maintenance of the microwave system in exchange for bandwidth capacity on the microwave to further the Mobile Data Project throughout the Northern Tier.
- All frequencies have been identified for the NTIP system, and application has been made for all sites. Letters of Concurrence are being requested (and obtained) where required.
- Discussions were held to determine the NTIC position on how 2005 ODP funding should be allocated to the eight consortiums throughout the State of Montana.
- Grant opportunities were identified for fire and ambulance services. There is a 5% match on these grants.
- The Board decided to send Don Bronstrom with a team from the State to a meeting with Emergency Management Alberta (EMA) to explore partnering opportunities.





### Project Update (Continued)



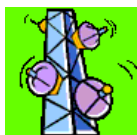
- The MOU which forms the NTIC expires on 11/30/05. It was recommended that the MOU be extended through 11/30/07 to allow time to complete the project in it's entirety. Extension requests will be presented to the respective County Commissioners for signature and return to DES.

### Team Updates



The Technical Team has been busy working on the design of the system. The system is a hybrid system consisting of 18 trunked sites covering the major population areas and roadways in the Northern Tier, and 5 conventional sites that tie into the system through control stations. All sites have been identified and a preliminary study made on the ability to connect the trunked sites with microwave.

Work is underway to meet with the site owners and work out the details for shared use of the facilities. In every case, the sites are existing sites that are in use by a variety of radio users. Building on what was learned by Concept Demonstration Project I, the Technical Team found that there was adequate coverage provided by existing sites, when combined into a single system.



Under the direction of the NTIC Board, the Technical Team has prepared an RFP for the microwave procurement. The RFP will be released soon, pending approval of the Board. Once a microwave vendor is selected, the Technical Team will focus on tower requirements to accommodate the microwave and radio equipment. Work is currently underway to determine shelter requirements.



The Technical Team has been also working with Motorola to kickoff the radio infrastructure portion of the project. A preliminary design has been jointly prepared and the first draft of the workplan is ready. Motorola is preparing to conduct a spectrum analysis at all sites to enable them to finalize the frequency dependent portion of the system design. Once completed, the equipment manufacturing will begin.



Don't forget that the Business Practice Review team will be formed soon. This team will answer the question "What's the best way to operate using the new system, in order to take the maximum advantage of it's features". This is a critical component of the system, and will lay the foundation for interoperable communications within the Northern Tier.

And finally, please remember that the latest information on the NTIP can always be found on the project website at:  
<http://www.discoveringmontana.com/itsd/policy/councils/SIEC/cdprojects/ntip/ntip.asp>

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